

### **Amendments to the Claims**

#### **1-3. (Cancelled)**

**4. (New)** A method for preventing or treating retinopathy resulting from damage and/or degeneration of the outer retinal layers, which comprises administering an effective amount of a hepatocyte growth factor as an active ingredient to a patient in need thereof.

**5. (New)** A method for preventing or treating a disease selected from macular degeneration or retinitis pigmentosa, which comprises administering an effective amount of a hepatocyte growth factor as an active ingredient to a patient in need thereof.

**6. (New)** A method for preventing or treating retinopathy, which comprises administering an effective amount of a hepatocyte growth factor as an active ingredient to a patient in need thereof.